

## THE USEFUL UNDERSTUDY

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE STAR CANNOT APPEAR.

Cases in Which the Public Will Take No Substitute—Others in Which None Can Be Found—Understudies Who Have Risen—Stage Child Hard to Replace.

One of New York's best known theatrical managers in speaking of the strength and the weakness of the star system said that the difficulty of providing understudies was among its chief disadvantages.

"In the old happy days of the stock company," he explained, "when parts were more or less interchangeable and the leading man one night announced 'Milk's carriage' the next, it was comparatively easy to fill in at a moment's notice and as the box office receipts did not depend on the appearance of any special actor, very often the fact that they were not to appear as advertised was not even mentioned, and if it was, none would think of demanding his money back."

"The contrary is the case now. People go to the theatre to see a certain celebrity, and when for any reason whatever that star is out of commission the theatre goes out of commission as well. Frequently when on the road a substitution is made, but that cannot happen in New York. New York insists on having what it pays for."

"The sense of that responsibility is

yet failed in a New York engagement and as her runs are always long the will power displayed during the last few weeks can only be appreciated by those who have had similar experiences. Miss Adams exhibits the greatest caution in everything she does and it is said that she never takes an automobile ride from her home in the city to her country place on Long Island without Mr. Frohman's permission. She has even cabled for that permission when Mr. Frohman has been in Europe and business affairs made the trip imperative.

John Drew, who while not a bon vivant loves a good dinner and its accompaniments, shows his knowledge of the necessity of taking unceasing care by a most rigid and circumspect diet while he is playing. In fourteen years he has never disappointed his managers or his audiences.

Billie Burke, the youngest star of the Frohman cosmo, did not separate herself quickly enough from a refractory pin when playing "Love Watches" in Hartford, Conn., and blood poisoning ensued. She did her best to ignore the accident but finally had to give up and the play was laid off three weeks. There was no understudy in the company and no one could be rushed in at a moment's notice, as happened when Margaret Illington broke down after playing "The Thief" for a record time and Katherine Grey was sent at once from New York to Boston to substitute.

Mme. Agulia, during the first performance of the Sicilian players, had a



WHEN THE UNDERSTUDY MAKES A HIT.

among the greatest burdens the star has to bear. It is a responsibility that gets heavier and heavier as the season advances. It is a responsibility that weighs especially on the young star who is perhaps for the first time featured in electric sparkles in front of the theatre, and who is keenly alive to the fact that not only her abilities but her staying powers as well are closely watched by the manager.

"If any one has lingering doubts in regard to the severity of discipline and the constant exercise of self-control demanded by the exigencies of this system it is only necessary to dispel them, to look at the figures of the long runs and to be told that not once has the leading character failed to appear."

"The illnesses and accidents that send the ordinary human being to bed, with doctor and trained nurse in attendance, are accepted as a part of the general scheme by the dramatic star, who may faint in the wings—never on the stage—may limp, cough, display bandaged limbs, but so long as locomotive and verbal powers are left must respond to the call boy's last word."

Maude Adams has no understudy, but frail as the little woman is she has never

similar accident, but whether her physique is better able to stand shocks gets heavier and heavier as the season advances. It is a responsibility that weighs especially on the young star who is perhaps for the first time featured in electric sparkles in front of the theatre, and who is keenly alive to the fact that not only her abilities but her staying powers as well are closely watched by the manager.

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## THOSE PEACH BASKET HATS

OBSERVATIONS OF THE NEW HEADGEAR OF WOMEN.

Had to Carry in a Gate—Worse for the Men Who Will Have to Sit Behind Them at the Ball Games—"Lucia" Seated—First-Inners at Atlantic City.

ATLANTIC CITY, March 27.—It would be overstating it perhaps to say that the peach basket hats now to be seen on the Boardwalk are as tall as old-fashioned cornucopias, but some of them at least can't be much shorter.

Peach basket hats never were meant for the month of March. They trap the breeze like an old-fashioned stun's, and on a gusty day the women wearing them on the Boardwalk have to navigate in whatever direction their wind inviting fingers carries them.

The women under the hats generally are fooled over under the force of the gusts, so that at times it appears as if their list is as great as they're making headway on one foot only. Their hats, brought upon by the sudden blasts, carry them to one rail or the other of the wooden Appian Way of the sea, and it is not uncommon to see a dozen of them hanging on for dear life.

As they have to hang on to the rail with both hands they can't get a clutch on their swaying peach baskets. Consequently it occasionally happens that their top gear is carried away. Worse than that, the rats, puffs and other embellishments of the crowning glory beneath the hat sometimes accompany the toppieces when it awakes aloft on the winds of the mocking, fickle winds, and then, gradually dropping, scuttles along the sand or flops into the wimpling sea.

When you see a very angry looking woman beating it along the Boardwalk to her hotel under a jury rig, so to speak, that is with her hat gone and rat and puffs with it and her own wisp of hair fastidiously swaddled in a veil, you may have just seen the result of a peach basket hat and that she is too sore over the public mortification to wait for some beach combing boy to return the hat and paraphernalia to her. To see two or three

dozen women bending and bowing and swaying under the eccentric propulsion of their March tossed peach basket hats is to imagine that, by some whimsical twist of the cards you've broken in upon a witches' dance on a Walpurgis night or a Walpurgis day anyhow.

Men folks, who possess little or no subtlety in these matters, are bound to wonder how a woman with a churn shaped top piece that's pulled down at least four inches below her eyes can possibly make her way along a crowded Boardwalk without a guide, but they do it somehow and without cutting eyes or slits in the forefins of the hats. It may be that they catch a faint view, just enough to guide them, of the world through the interstices of the straw, but this of course is mere conjecture.

It is observed that quite a number of the women wearing peach basket hats carry long crook handled canes. This contributes to the witchlike effect of an ensemble of peach basket hatted women, for it may well be that the women carry the canes for the purpose of feeling their way along the Boardwalk, just as a blind man uses a cane in lieu of eyes.

When the merry widow mushroom hats appeared the baseball fans rightly figured that they were in pretty bad when they happened to draw a seat behind one of them. Wait till they try to study the inside diamond plays behind a peach basket hat or so!

This reflection came to the surface of many masculine minds at a moving picture show on one of the piers here the other night. It appeared as if about a dozen women from the same hotel, all provided with peach basket hats of an almost uncanny elongation, had entered into a conspiracy to keep their hats on at the moving picture show.

They occupied, all together, an entire centre row of seats. Folks sitting behind them—they happened to be mostly men folks—were as effectually cut off from a view of the moving picture screen as if they had been outside on the Boardwalk. The best they could do by straining their gaze was to catch a view of the plaster garbages on the stage arch above the screen.

"They'll have to take 'em off," the men behind the peach baskets whispered confidently to each other. "There'll be a



FIND THE UNDERSTUDY.

"The other evening William Hooge, star of 'The Man From Home,' was held up for speeding by a zealous copdrometer and spent sixty minutes of his valuable time explaining and making good in other ways, while an impatient audience, refusing to take advantage of the opportunity to have its money refunded, sat and waited with more or less impatience his tardy appearance."

Finally Mr. Hooge, who had lived up to the title of his piece better than he had intended, came before the footlights and in auto togs and a sweet smile promised the audience that if it would give him just a few minutes more in which to don his stage clothes and make-up he would be enormously obliged. He was even more frantically applauded than if he had appeared on time, and the audience settled itself happily into place.

If a card had been hung up announcing that an understudy would play his part the auditorium would have been emptied in ten minutes or less.

When you inquire if Willie Collier has an understudy his manager hesitates a moment and then replies that the question reminds him, because it is so different, of another inquiry made recently. Some one wanted to see the manuscript

every once in a while as five minutes earlier than the week previous. That it will, like the Chinese plays, soon run into the next day is fully expected and that it will before the season is over be advertised as a revival of the continuous performance is not unlikely.

Rose Stahl, who has no understudy, has really a record achievement in "The Chorus Lady," in which she has appeared some 2,500 times without disappointing her managers, and the surprising thing about it is that she contends that she likes it just as much as ever.

The stage child naturally offers as many problems along this line as the star. There are few children who are clever enough to fill the parts written for them and if a manager is fortunate enough to find one he is rarely fortunate enough to find a substitute. Then too if the child part in a play is emphasized at all it usually stands for something so important that it can rarely be left out without injury to the play. The fear of sickness and consequent non-appearance is of course always present when a child part is incorporated, although statistics show that there is little real danger.

The Fuller children in "The Traveling Salesman" have not missed a perform-

ance during the long run and have practically created an important part out of what at first reading seemed to be unimportant lines. There are two manuscripts to the play and the second, which leaves out the children's lines entirely, has not so far been called into requisition, although the play has had a run of 275 nights.

"The part of the child played by Paul Tansy in 'This Woman and This Man' is so important that without it the play would be seriously crippled, if not absolutely spoiled. In consequence another member of the Tansy family, a younger boy, is Paul's understudy and it is rumored that there has been considerable feeling in a portion of the family during the run of the piece over Paul's unnaturally good health and interest in his work."

In musical comedy there are probably more understudies available than in any other kind of dramatic work. Every member of the chorus learns the rôle required only the ability to look pretty and the recitation of some foolish lines. Therefore the prima donna can drop out and her place be filled at a moment's notice. Fritz Scheff has the reputation of being more generous to her understudies than any other singer, and so there is great competition for the opportunity of studying her rôle.

In musical comedy, no matter how well advertised the prima donna may be, the audience displays as a general thing an interest great enough in the ensemble to bear philosophically the loss of the principal singer so long as No. 2 has charm and voice enough to get over the footlights, or if not No. 2, No. 3.

"The part," said another manager, "that many a man or woman has gone on suddenly as an understudy for a leading part and has made an instantaneous hit does not necessarily mean that the understudy is destined for future honors. The quality required for an understudy is not as important as that required for a star. It is purely imitative. Any tendency toward creative work is frowned upon if not actually forbidden."

"The understudy is supposed to have thoroughly copied the mannerisms of the person who has played the part and is required only to duplicate them, and when you realize that every night and at every rehearsal that study has gone on and that oftentimes the understudy is present at the special instructions given by the stage manager it is not surprising that the imitation is oftentimes better than the original, but it is an imitation, and the credit for the original creative work is not due the understudy."

"There never was a better piece of imitative work done than that of the son of Joe Jefferson, who understudied his father for years. Tom Jefferson had not only the makeup part but the voice, manner and all the little shadings that make up the rôle of the irrepressible Rip van Winkle. Particularly in the last years of Jefferson's life Tom would go on for the second or third act, and oftentimes even the members of the company did not know of the substitution."

"Marie Quive, sister of Grace Van Studdiford, understudies her and has, thanks to her resemblance to the more gifted member of the family, gone on

at a moment's notice, and the audience has been none the wiser for the change. Another woman who has had the advantage of years of imitative study is the sister of Edith Wynne Mathison, who has been called on occasionally to substitute, not an easy task when one realizes that Mrs. Kennedy has a voice which is not easy to duplicate."

"Usually in a stock company the rôle of understudying is that each member shall study the part above him, that is the player with a thinking part understudies the butler or maid who comes on and prepares the audience for the play with a couple of lines, the butler and maid in turn learn the parts of the least important characters next to themselves, and so on through the cast. The work of learning these extra parts is not paid for by any increase of salary unless the substitution is made and then the regular salary of the character is given."

"Unfortunately for the understudy, he cannot always conceal his interest in the health of the leading man. In fact, this interest is oftentimes shown so flagrantly that a request has been made that he shall not be allowed in the wings or at any other vantage point where, raising his eyes suddenly, the limelight favorite can meet his glittering orbs and read therein a hope that a support may fall at the climatic moment, fell him to the earth and give the long suffering student of his peculiarities an opportunity to show the world the possibilities that lie in an understudied rôle."

"The ability to memorize quickly if not a sine qua non is at least a help in the mental equipment of the actor who begins with a small part and large ambitions directed understudyward. An actor of this season's prestige, sent for suddenly to fill a part left vacant at a moment's notice, learned a long rôle on his way from New York to Boston, and

disease from which he died later; but his condition was concealed from the public, the members of the touring company were sworn to secrecy and an unknown member of the cast played the part of the invalid for several months.

Julie Opp carefully understudied John Nielson when she first went on the stage under the management of George Alexander and was soon called upon to appear in "Twelfth Night" and "As You Like It." Following this came suddenly the demand for her appearance in "The Princess and the Butterfly," in which she toured successfully through the British provinces, and her work was so good that as a great favor Mr. Alexander lent her to Frohman to play the season in New York. This was Miss Opp's first appearance as a star, in fact her first appearance in New York on the stage.

Herbert Keiley, so runs the tale, playing a small part in the provinces of England, got his first opportunity to play a rôle where he could really put his teeth in by being the fortunate possessor not only of a dress suit but of the only dress suit the company owned after the leading man in a huff had shaken the dust of the one night stand from his London pointed toes. Mr. Keiley, filling both evening clothes and rôle acceptably, was not again pushed into the ranks, and he is fond of telling the story of his understudy days.

In the far West a bunch of ranchmen of the town of Omaha noted the advertisement of "Michael Strogoff," and applied for places as supernumeraries as a climax to their fun. Among the number was Edmund Breece, now playing the serious part of the family lawyer in "The Third Degree."

An explosion of gunpowder occurring before its cue was given and by so doing preventing the leading man from going on at his cue, Breece noted the paralysis of the rest of the crowd as well as the ter-



HE TELLS THEM HE WAS FAR FROM HOME.

arriving at the Hub went on at the performance of the evening and did not miss a single line.

"There are some stars who have to be understudied by every one in the company. The last time Ellen Terry played here it is said that whenever she turned with a particularly agonizing expression toward the company the one nearest helped her out, and as her repertoire of plays changed a number of times the feat of memory of these unclassified understudies deserves passing mention at least."

Stage annals are of course filled with understudy stories and it is only necessary to turn to them to find pages marked here and there.

When Robson and Crane played the two Dromios in "The Comedy of Errors," owing to a slight falling of Robson which endeared him to his fellow men, his inter-fered with his dramatic business, it became frequently necessary for Crane to play both parts and to imitate with touching and affectionate fidelity the lip of a man whom at the moment he would like to consign with no uncertain syllables to the nethermost parts of perdition.

On the road one of the Rogers brothers, the famous Gus, showed evidences of the

ror of the leading lady waiting to be rescued with no rescuer in sight. Having carefully understudied the part on his own account, he seized a nearby ladder, fastened it on with more attention to haste than becomingness, and shouting "For God, the Czar and my country!" leaped madly into the centre of the stage and thrillingly seized the impatient heroine from the danger impending, while court plaster in strips was administered to a cursing hero somewhere in the wings.

Breece's presence of mind as well as body was rewarded by the offer of permanent employment, in which for a long time he managed to draw \$10 a week and "cakes," which in theatrical parlance signifies board.

F. L. Stoddard, cast for the part of Baron Hermalin in "A Parisian Romance," and having serious misgivings as to his abilities to create a part so different from his usual rôle, at the last moment gave Richard Mansfield, who had understudied him at rehearsals, a chance so unexpected that it seemed as if fate had interposed in his favor.

All the understudies of E. S. Willard are said to have achieved histrionic honors. Among them are Keiley and Kyrie Bellew.

## BACK YARD GARDENS.

A Space 20 by 50 Feet Will Supply the Family Vegetables.

"A space twenty by fifty feet may, under intensive culture, be made to yield fresh vegetables for a small family through half the year," says Martha McCulloch, Williams in the *Circles* magazine. "With 40 feet by 50, or 50 by 100, there can be a garden yielding riotous plenty."

"Have the spading done as early as possible, use thoroughly rotted manure, and supplement it with some good commercial fertilizer, either broadcast and raked in or put in hills or drills."

"It is a waste of seed, strength and time to plant a garden in poor soil. The seed will come up, the spindling plants will be hardier to work than if they were luxuriant, and the resultant crop will be most conspicuously by its absence."

"So if it is impossible to have more make small rich beds, four feet wide and as long as the manure holds out, and sow them crosswise with such things as radishes, lettuce, cress, parsley, beans, carrots, radishes, tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers."

"Do not adventure upon corn unless it is sweet corn planted on the pea space as a second crop, to come in just before frost. Make an asparagus bed all across one end of the plot, setting two-year-old roots, and fertilizing the bed heavily in early summer just after cutting ceases."

"Peas are so hardy they may be planted before snow is past, provided of course the ground is right when they go in. Make it fine and light, cover the seed at least three inches deep, then tramp the earth over them, setting the feet so one track catches the other. A quart of seed will sow 100 feet of drill the proper thickness. An ounce of best seed will sow the same row length."

"Cut up a young garden with a wheel hoe under a trowel and hand hoe—remembering Isaac Walton's advice—as to the bait worm: 'Use him as though you loved him.' As one thing yields pull it up and plant something else."

## CEDAR FOR PENCILS.

The Only Wood Whose Price Is Always Quoted by the Pound.

The lead pencil is one of the most common articles in every day use, and since practically the only wood used in its manufacture is red cedar and since the pencil industry is steadily growing (\$20,000,000 are manufactured annually in the United States) the supply of red cedar is becoming greatly depleted.

Red cedar has a soft, straight grain and is very free from defects when properly grown. Because of its peculiar qualities, no good substitute for it has ever been found, and it is doubtful if any other wood used in industry is so dependent upon a single species as the pencil industry is dependent upon red cedar. It is the only wood the price of which is always quoted by the pound.

The popular belief is that the second growth red cedar never reaches marketable size, says *Country Life in America*, but the forest service has made a careful study of the subject and has reached the conclusion that it can be profitably grown in regions of its development.

Some changes are recommended in the present forest management in order to secure the desired growth. In the Southern forests it must have a better chance instead of being considered, as now, a negligible quantity in its younger stages. Many of the forest grown trees which are now cut for fence posts can be profitably left to attain their full development and thus become available for pencil wood.

## Strategic Growth of Olive Trees.

From the Consular Reports.

Attention is seldom called to a remarkable and curious characteristic of the olive tree. After many years of growth the different large branches of the trunk separate gradually from the trunk until they are quite divided from one another down into the root. These then slowly move apart, and in some instances six or seven distinct trees stand in the area which before surrounded the main tree, and they will sometimes be as much as twenty feet apart.

All of the first-inners, whether they

whose escort happened to be a clip—a

knowing onlookers—performed entertain-

ingly with the aid of her peach basket

hat and the clip.

The first thing that appeared on the screen concerned the top pieces. It was a huge, varicolored placard, showing a woman wearing an impossibly large hat and a bunch of miserable looking male critters dodging behind the hat trying to see something. Beside the picture in immense letters was this:

"Ladies, Take Off Your Hats, Please."

The row of women under the peach basket hats moved never a muscle, much less a hatpin grabbing hand. They must have had it made up all right. The men behind them gazed at each other in consternation.

"Thanks!" was the next flash on the screen. As concerned the row of women under the peach basket hats the "Thanks" looked like sarcasm. Never a move made they.

The man behind the hats bent forward. "Madam," they said in unison respectively to the woman directly in front of them, "would you be—good enough to—"

No, the women wouldn't be good enough to. Their hats were there to stick and so were they.

An usher was summoned by the men. The usher asked the women if they'd be good enough to, &c. No, they wouldn't. They didn't tell the usher so. They didn't tell him anything, but they kept on to their hats.

The manager of the show appeared. Would the ladies be good enough to? Again they wouldn't. Not a word did they have to say, but they just wouldn't, so there now. The manager looked pained—very much pained. Then he beat it up the aisle and appeared no more. The women got away with it.

The men behind the hats at the ball games. Suffering men can find moral support at ball games, even if they are diphtheria with torn rims at moving picture shows.

Grapes, mostly of the russet Malaga persuasion, appear to be the favored fruit-ornamentations of the peach basket hats, though many are seen littered with huge purple plums, impossibly luscious hand painted peaches, realistic crab-apples and even such more or less unrecognizable exotic near fruits as persimmons and pawpaws. But grapes have the call. There's an insinuating look about the grapes, but you can generally tell that they're meant to mean grapes.

A few evenings ago on one of the band

pers a woman of innate insouciance,

presently the young woman reached up a dainty gloved hand and plucked one of the hat garnishing Hamburg grapes from the bunch and ate it. That was the desired signal for the clip.

He pulled a grape from the bunch and ate it. It did not take them very long once the start was made to eat between them the entire bunch of Hamburg grapes. Throughout the performance the young woman yawned thus giving the impression that it was virtually an everyday thing for her and her escorts to make little refectories from her hat trimmings.

The main pier band down here is an Italian outfit conducted by a pallid young Tasso with a great deal of hair. Now any time you go on the pier to listen to the music the band you are bound to hear unless you come away—the blared sextet from "Lucia" at least twice, and sometimes thrice.

The "Lucia" sextet is the one best bet by way of a correct piece here. The thing is played as part of the regular three daily band performances on the pier. Then it's the main pier band down here is an Italian outfit conducted by a pallid young Tasso with a great deal of hair. Now any time you go on the pier to listen to the music the band you are bound to hear unless you come away—the blared sextet from "Lucia" at least twice, and sometimes thrice.

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